

Historic, archived document

Do not assume content reflects current scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

502
SUSTAINING

UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS (#94)

11.30 - 12.30 PM

MARCH 16, 19 34

FRIDAY

ANNOUNCER: "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" --

ORCHESTRA: QUARTET: RANGER SONG.

ANNOUNCER: Well, as you know, our old friends Ranger Jim Robbins and his young assistant, Jerry Quick, are back on the job again at the Pine Cone Ranger Station. They came back last week after two months on detail to other National Forests to take charge of the work of Emergency Conservation Camps, and they'd hardly arrived, you remember, when one of those sudden storms came up to make things tough. It was one of those early spring blizzards which so frequently bring suffering and loss to western mountain communities. These blizzards mean more work for the forest rangers - organizing relief for distressed settlers and starving live stock, restoring telephone and other forest communications, and repairing damages to National Forest properties. Since the big blizzard a week ago Ranger Jim and Jerry Quick have been engaged in this sort of work and today as we tune in at the Pine Cone Ranger Station they're taking a little breathing spell, and talking it over. Let's listen in and get the latest news on the storm.

JERRY: Gosh! Am ' glad I don't have to get out and buck that snow again today. I don't care if I never see another snow drift.

JIM: Well - I'm glad you got that phone line working yesterday. I talked with the Supervisor this morning and got a pretty good line on conditions in the foot hills.

JERRY: Anybody lost down that way?

JIM: Not so far as he knows. He says there's several outfits not heard from yet. Couple of sheep herders in the hospital with bad frost bites.

JERRY: What about stock?

JIM: They figure about 300 head of cattle.

JERRY: Gee, that's too bad. Who's stuff was it?

JIM: Box O 'pears to be the heaviest loser. They lost 70 head in that big lower pasture of theirs. Some doggies they just shipped in -- couldn't stand the cold.

JERRY: Who else lost stock?

JIM: Oh, he says pretty near everybody reports from one to ten head. And some heavy sheep losses. Down on the desert. He hasn't heard how many. He wanted to know if everybody is accounted for up here. I told him yes.

JERRY: We haven't heard from Mike Bundy and Rattlesnake Jack.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Well, those fellows just hole up and hibernate this kind of weather I reckon. I wouldn't worry about them.

(PHONE RINGS)

JERRY: I'll answer it, Jim --

JIM: Let's hope it isn't somebody calling for help.

JERRY: (ANSWERING PHONE) Hello, hello -- Yeah this is the ranger station -- yeah -- no, this is Jerry -- Oh, just a minute, Jim's right here, I'll put him on -- (TO JIM) It's the Supervisor --

JIM: (SOUND OF CHAIR SHOVED BACK) What does he want? (LOUDER TO PHONE) Hello, Bert. How are you this morning? Yeah, the phone's working fine -- Elk, eh? -- Starving? -- Well, how many elk are there? -- Where are they? -- Yeah -- Have you got any money to buy hay? How do you expect me to feed elk with nothing to feed them? -- Yeah something's got to be done all right. -- Well you see what you can do about raisin' some money, Bert. I'll get the feed to 'em -- yeah. So long, Bert. (HANGS UP PHONE)

JERRY: Sounds like we've got a job!

JIM: Yeah, and a tough one too. Bert's had a report that the elk up on the Slide Mountain Divide are starving. Wants us to get some feed to them.

JERRY: Where you going to get the feed?

JIM: Sportsmen are all excited about it. They're passing the hat in town and Bert's going to wire headquarters and ask for some Government funds. He says they've got enough promised so we can go ahead and buy some hay. (SOUND OF LOUD KNOCK ON THE DOOR)

JIM: Come in.

(DOOR OPENS)

RATTLESNAKE JACK: (COMING IN) Howdy, Ranger.

JIM: (BANTERING) Hello, well if it ain't Rattlesnake Jack. I thought you were dead. I was just going to organize a party to go up and fetch you out on a board.

JACK: Dontcha think it -- ya can't kill me off with no blizzard.

JIM: (CHUCKLES) Any snow up your way?

JACK: Oh yes, a little - three - four foot on the level - drifted some places ten - twelve foot.

JIM: Say Jack, seen any elk signs up there?

JACK: Jest what I came to see you 'bout Ranger! Them elk's plumb starvin to death. They's a big bunch of 'em yardin' right at my place and I can't chase 'em off. By doggies! I had a little stack o' hay put up and they took the hull works -- not a spear left. Somebody's gotta pay me some damages fer that hay

JIM: Well if you've been feeding them a lot of hay they're not starving, are they?

JACK: Aw-w I'm tellin' yuh, Ranger, them elk's in bad shape. Some of the leetle fellers and the cows is down and can't get up. They've et the willows back in places to the size o' yore thumb. It's terrible. -- I'm tellin' yuh yuh gotta do somethin' about it quick or yah won't have no elk.

JERRY: (SYMPATHETICALLY) Gosh! I'll say we will. What can we do Jim?

JIM: The Supervisor phoned me this morning about those elk. Some of the boys down at the Glen are collecting some money to buy hay for them.

JACK: Wal, ya can pay me fer the hay they et fer me.

JIM: No Jack, this isn't damage money, it's to furnish more hay to save the elk. What the chances of getting up there with - say a half a dozen teams?

JACK: Wall that's the only way yah kin do it Mr. Robbins, but I'm a tellin' yah it'll be dad-burned tough sleddin'. The snow's that deep --

JIM: (BRISKLY) Okay. Let's fly at it and get it done. Jack, we'll figure on you lending a hand. Jerry you run down to Alf Erickson's and see if you can borrow his big sleighs. Tell him we want four horses - the big teams - Babe 'n Sally and Jumbo 'n that big black horse.

JERRY: Okay Jim.

JIM: And find out how much hay he can spare and how much he wants for it.

JERRY: Sure.

JIM: I'll go see Al Perkins about getting some of the Company's teams and get prices on hay too. We'll have some hay up there before dark.

JACK: Don't think you c'n make it. Ya ain't got no idea how bad 'tis.

JIM: Come along Jack. You can ride back home on top the first load.

JACK: No sir - not me. I'll go back the way I come, on snow shoes.

I know I'll get there that away.

JIM: (LAUGHS(FADEOUT))

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

(ROAR OF CATERPILLAR TRACTOR. ENGINE STALLS AND QUILTS)

JIM: (CALLING) Back up, Ernie, and give 'er all you got. If ya can break through that drift we'll have clear sailing all the rest of the way.

ERNIE: (OFF) Awright here goes! (MOTOR STARTS AND ROARS LOUDLY - SUDDENLY BECOMES MUFFLED AND GRADUALLY FADES IN DISTANCE)

JERRY: Hooray, he's through!

JIM: (EXCLAIMS) Good work! (CALLING) Come on, Alf --
(SOUND HEAVY BREATHING OF SEVERAL HORSES COMING CLOSER. CLOSE UP, DRIVER YELL "WHOA" - LABORED BREATHING OF HORSES CONTINUES)

JIM: Well, Alf, you're almost there --

ALF: (SWEDISH DIALECT) Ay tank dat purty gude. He bane hard work you bat you.

JERRY: You've got a dandy team Mr. Erickson. And boy, are they steamin! They're ringing wet.

JIM: Take good care of them, Alf. Don't let 'em get cold.

ALF: Yah! I got plenty blankets you bat.

JIM: Where's the other outfit?

ALF: Aye don't see dem for long time - Ay tank maybe dey get stuck. Ay got best horse on Vinding Crick.

JIM: Well if they don't show up pretty quick Jerry, you better snow shoe down and see if they're in trouble.

JERRY: All right. - Say who is that coming out of the brush over there?

JIM: I'll be hanged if it ain't Rattlesnake Jack. (CALLS) Well Jack, here we are.

JERRY: And before dark at that.

JACK: (COMING UP) Yessir I'd a swore yuh couldn't make it, but yuh did

JIM: (CHUCKLES) We couldn't have done it if I hadn't brought that road tractor to break down the drifts. Now where's the elk?

JACK: Well sir they's five head right down in them willows. They's so weak they wouldn't get outa my way when I come through jes' now. Ye'll find 'em strung out in little bunches all the way up the creek to my place. The main bunch is there.

JIM: Throw off a bale here Alf, and then pull up to Jack's cabin with the rest.

ALF: (OFF) Aw right - look oudt. Har it come. (THUD OF BALE OF HAY ON THE SNOW)

JIM: There - let's break that out and carry it over to this bunch. Find out what's become of the other teams, Jerry --

JERRY: (OFF) Here they come -- they're just coming in sight.

JIM: That's good -- have them string their load out a bale at a time along the road. (FADE OUT - PAUSE - FADE IN)

JERRY: Gosh, Jim, look at this poor little cuss -- he's all in.

JIM: Yeah. Just a yearling. That cow must be his mother. She's in pretty fair condition.

JERRY: Here, poor little feller, how about some hay? (SOUND OF HAY RUSTLING) Here, wake up and eat that. Gosh, Jim, he won't eat. He won't even open his eyes.

JIM: I'm afraid he's too far gone, Jerry.

JERRY: I ain't going to see him starve to death with food right before him. I'm going to make him get up.

JIM: (GOING OFF) No use Jerry - all we can do is bring the food to 'em. If he can't eat it let's save those that can. And you better not fool with any elk calves when the mother's around, anyhow.

JACK: (OFF) Yeah - (CALLS) Watch yore step young feller!

JERRY: (STUBBORNLY) No sir he's got to eat. (GRUNTS) Here, get up, little feller --

JIM: (OFF, WARNING) I wouldn't fool with him, Jerry. You'll get yourself in a jam.

JERRY: Here, stand up, you - (GRUNTS AND PANTS) Come on - Get up on your feet - that's the way - (LOW MOAN OF THE CALF)

JIM: (SHOUTING OFF) Hey! Jerry! Watch out! The cow - she's charging you! (CRASHING OF BRUSH)

JACK: (SIMULTANEOUSLY) Hey! Scat ye she devil --

JERRY: (OFF) Hey! Get away! Get away now! -- Umph! Ouch!

JIM: (RUNNING) Get out! Beat it you old - Whish! - Well, how about it, son? Hurt you any?

JERRY: (SPUTTERING IN SNOW) Whew! Boy! - I guess not -- Gosh, the old cow sure bumped me though - who'd a thought she had life enough for that.

JIM: You never can tell about these wild critters (CHUCKLING) The old mother kinda connected with the seat of your britches, eh? Lucky the snow was deep or she'd've butted you into the next county.

JERRY: I'll say --

JIM: Standin' on both feet, are you?

JERRY: Yeah. (SLAPPING SNOW OFF HIS CLOTHES) Gosh, I'm full of snow.

JIM: (CHUCKLING) Well, how about helping me spread this hay around - just to show there's no hard feelings.

JERRY: Okay. But what'll we do with the calf?

JIM: Just leave it alone. Put some hay by it. It may rouse up and eat.

JERRY: (RELUCTANTLY) I guess you're right, Jim - but gosh, it seems a shame we can't do anything to save it.

JIM: There's lots more just as bad off. We'd better give our attention to those we can help.

JERRY: Poor little feller --

JACK: (OFF) Hey! Give us a lift with this toboggan, will yah?

JIM: Lend Jack a hand will you Jerry? We've got to get this hay spread before it gets dark.

JERRY: O.K. Jim.

FADEOUT

ANNOUNCER: Well, we'll leave the Rangers here. Many a ranger on many a National Forest this winter has performed similar errands of mercy - looking after the welfare of the wild game of the West. "Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers" comes to you each week at this time as a presentation of the National Broadcasting Company, with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service --
Wait a minute, folks, - here's a bulletin from the United States Forest Service that all you lovers of wildlife will be interested in. It says:

The wild, rugged Sun River area within the Lewis and Clark National Forest, Montana, home of the country's third largest elk herd, has been designated as a Primitive Area by F.A. Silcox, Chief of the United States Forest Service.

Extending from and lying immediately east of the Continental Divide, this new Primitive Area covers 240,000 acres of federal land on Sun River, a tributary of the Missouri. There are no roads nor permanent human habitations within the tract. The area is said to be unsurpassed in the variety of attraction it offers to sportsmen, naturalists, students of Indian lore, and recreationists.

Within its boundaries are stupendous limestone peaks, reefs, and precipices, including the famous "Chinese Wall" which, with a sheer drop of more than 1,000 feet, extends for 15 miles with only one place where it can be crossed. Among limestone cliffs and crags, on which ancient Indian carvings may still be seen, mountain sheep and goats make their homes. Literally honeycombed with game trails which were well known to Indians long before the advent of white men, this area is also the home of the Sun River elk herd, third largest in the United States.

The Sun River elk herd, is in 1910 numbered 300, had increased, with the abundance of summer range and the protection afforded, to more than 5,000 head by 1930. This huge increase, however, was more than the limited amount of winter range could support, except during unusually open winters with light snows, so the herd split about this time, in search of winter sustenance. Many of the elk, invading pastures and robbing haystacks, seriously damaged valley ranches to the east until irate farmers forced them back to their home on Sun River. Others traveled west, crossed the Continental Divide and established themselves on the South Fork of the Flathead River in the Flathead National Forest.

According to local forest rangers, there are more than 3,000 elk in the present Sun River herd, despite the fact that winter range is still a serious problem.

Without settlements, residences, ranches, or roads, the Sun River Primitive Area affords, Forest Service men say, an ideal opportunity to explore country almost as wild today as when it was crossed and recrossed by Flathead, Blackfeet, and Nezperce war parties long before the coming of White men.

Within this territory the Forest Service will neither construct roads nor issue permits for their construction. Other projects will be confined to those needed for adequate fire control, and no private structures or developments providing for occupancy or use will be allowed.

"The Sun River area is still so unspoiled by the advance of civilization and offers so many natural attractions," the Forest Service states, "That it will be administered by Forest officers in such a manner that eastern as well as local people may enjoy conditions as near primitive as it is possible to keep them."

61/5/12/34

10:30 AM

